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ABSTRACT

Games, simulations and related techniques as an extension of the language teacher's repertory are receiving renewed attention. The value of goal-directed pair or group activities in teaching for communicative competence is obvious. Less value is attached to the sort of "language games" which consist of juggling verbal formulae of little or no communicative intent. The articles in this issue of "ELT Documents" cover a broad area, from the closely rule-bound game using predictable language formulae through to the freer and more extensive simulation where language needs are less predictable and the main teaching value may lie in the linguistic follow-up. For readers interested in trying some of the suggestions made in the articles, bibliographies and lists of commercially available games and activities are included. The articles in this issue are: "Games and Simulations in English Language Teaching," by J.Y.K. Kerr; "Using Simulation in Teaching English for Specific Purposes," by Gill Sturtridge; "Role-Play," by Patricia Hugglestone; and "The Use of Dramatic Techniques in Foreign Language Learning," by Alan Maley and Alan Duff. (Author/CLK)

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# ELT documents

# Games, simulations and role-playing

## 77/1

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## Introduction

GAMES, SIMULATIONS and related techniques as an extension of the language-teacher's repertory are receiving renewed attention. The value of goal-directed pair- or group-activities in teaching for Communicative Competence is obvious. Less value is attached to the sort of 'language games' which consist of juggling of verbal formulae of little or no communicative intent. The articles in this issue of *ELT Documents* cover a broad area, from the closely rule-bound game using predictable language formulae through to the freer and more extensive simulation where language needs are less predictable and the main teaching value may lie in the linguistic follow-up. For readers interested in trying some of the suggestions made in the articles we have included bibliographies and lists of commercially available games and activities. Readers are particularly referred to G I Gibbs's *Handbook of Games and Simulations* (Spon, 1974) for a comprehensive list of activities which could be adapted by the teacher to EFL purposes. There is also a section on games and activities useful for English for specific purposes in ETIC's Information Guide No 2 (*English for Specific Purposes*).

# GAMES AND SIMULATIONS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

J Y K Kerr

## Introduction

AT THE outset it would be useful to clarify as far as possible the typical characteristics of games on the one hand and simulations on the other.

Most people would agree that a game is essentially a form of recreation and that it should give enjoyment to the players. A game is not *necessary* in the way earning one's living or eating or sleeping is necessary. It is characterised

a by explicit rules which the players are to observe; and

b in most cases by an objective to be reached or a task to be performed;

eg a number of cards are to be collected or discarded, or a given route, symbolised by squares on a board, is to be completed in order to win the game. (On this occasion we shall disregard the category of athletic games – despite the fact that these, too, can in favourable circumstances become a vehicle for language practice.) Whether the players of a game need compete against one another is not perhaps essential. A game with only one player – patience, for example – is bent on solving a problem; so is the person doing a crossword-puzzle. The element we wish to identify, therefore, might more accurately be called 'challenge' than 'competition'.

A simulation, on the other hand, is governed not so much by rules as by information, data or – to use the fashionable term – a scenario, together with a clearly defined objective. There is usually a set of procedures to be followed or stages to be completed. The participants are required to accept these and behave within the situation as if it were a real one. Mostly the participants are to assume a role which may or may not be close to their occupation in real life and may or may not entail attitudes or opinions quite different from those which they would adopt if the situation were real and not simulated. For example, at one extreme a simulation might consist of air traffic control staff acting in their normal professional roles in the circumstances of a (hypothetical) hi-jacking; at the other extreme a group of schoolchildren might be asked to conduct a mock trial or mock party-political election. Both the moves and the outcome of a typical simulation are, therefore, much less predictable than those of a typical game, since they are the result of numerous decisions made individually or jointly by the participants and of the interaction of their personalities during the decision-making process.
The element of role-play is clearly present in some games – for example, in

Monopoly, where the players assume the role of financiers or property speculators, or in the ancient war-games such as chess. But it would be difficult to claim any other role than player or opponent for participants in such games as dominoes or bridge. Role-play, whether more or less elaborate, does however seem to be an essential feature of simulations. The participants are required to act 'as if' – as if they found themselves in a hypothetical situation, and perhaps also as if they were people different from their real selves.

As for games applied to language learning, a further degree of categorisation is useful. We can distinguish between games in which the language-practice element is limited to a few syntactical patterns, a number of lexical sets and/or fixed formulae, as in Happy Families (eg 'Have you got Mrs Bun the baker's wife?' 'No, I'm sorry I haven't.'). Games of this type are, in effect, highly contextualised drills – made more purposeful by the attraction of winning the game; they are admirably suited to the earlier stages of language-learning, but they do not give the more advanced learner much scope in expressing himself.

In contrast, there are what may be called communication games (or tasks) in which the language the participants will need to use is very much less predictable, though it may well fall within a particular register of English. Here the degree of linguistic success or failure will depend on the effectiveness of the player's powers of communication rather than on this control over a number of identifiable syntactical or lexical items.

**Subject matter**

Children and adults alike quickly lose interest in a game or simulation if the conceptual level is inappropriate; moreover the theme should be one with which the participants can readily identify. In certain cultures 'game' suggests frivolity and is better replaced by 'practice' or 'task' if the adults are not to dismiss such activities as childish. Adults in general understandably prefer activities close to those in which they themselves expect to use the language; eg making travel arrangements or taking part in a committee-meeting. Nevertheless the degree of involvement and enthusiasm aroused by a game or simulation in a particular group of students is extremely difficult for the teacher to predict, as this partly depends on the dynamics of the group.

**Number of players**

Classes of twenty or more students are too large to benefit greatly from language games and simulations, since individual speaking time is bound to be very short. In the case of games, provided the room is big enough and the furniture flexible, it is entirely possible for the teacher to organise several games simultaneously with groups of, say, four to seven players each. Student groups can rotate from game to game so that eventually all the groups have played all the games. Meanwhile the teacher moves among the group in a supervisory and consultative role. The initial

difficulty – getting all the games started at the same time – can be overcome by issuing written rules or instructions to each game and making it part of the players' task to understand these correctly.

In the case of simulations, large numbers are best catered for by dividing them into small groups and requiring each group to perform a separate but interrelated task; for example, if the overall task is to prepare the front page of a newspaper, one group can act as editors, another as copywriters, and a third as reporters and subjects to be interviewed.

**Linguistic content**

When selecting games or simulations for inclusion in an ELT programme, one important consideration must be the nature of the language to be employed and its usefulness to the students. Reference has already been made to those games which practise a limited number of set responses: in such cases the teacher can ensure, by prior demonstration and drilling, that the students know what to say at each stage of the game and that they use these items correctly as the game proceeds. In communication games, however, the exact language that the student will need in order to express himself is much less predictable, though broad semantic areas can usually be anticipated. The teacher may limit linguistic preparation to key items of vocabulary but should be ready to help students who are struggling to communicate, using the language that they momentarily need.

Johnson and Morrow in their article published in *ELT Documents* 76/2 reminded us that simulations can be devised at elementary stages of language-learning; but the more complex and lengthy type of simulation by its very nature is less susceptible of linguistic control. Nevertheless it is still possible – desirable, in fact – to prepare the students beforehand by practising some of the functional language they are likely to need in the simulation; eg giving orders or instructions, expressing agreement or disagreement, making proposals, and so on. Here, too, the indispensable lexis of the subject matter must be taught where necessary.

**Design**

Teachers wishing to design their own games and simulations should be given every encouragement to do so, and indeed home-made activities of this type can be geared more exactly to the needs of a particular group of students who may well share the same professional interests and cultural background. The important thing to remember is that the particular activity should have a clear-cut aim or terminal point though this may be achieved in a number of progressive stages and that active participation should be required of everybody according to linguistic capacity.

If the activity is to practise true communication, it is wise to distribute only part of the total information required to each participant so as to make its oral exchange inevitable. This, in more abstract form, is the principle underlying most card-games.

Another device for ensuring maximum communicative activity is to require groups of participants to discuss a particular plan of action or line of argument among themselves before confronting rival groups.

As the time-factor is usually difficult for the teacher to estimate in advance, it may be worth devising an additional rule or a new complicating factor to be held in reserve by the teacher and introduced into the activity if it shows signs of flagging or of finishing earlier than expected.

Another essential part of the design is to establish clearly the source of control, which may take several forms: a. a set of written rules; b. a participant acting as group-leader or referee (or chairman or director in the case of simulations); c. the teacher. There is much to be said for the teacher *not* participating directly on such occasions, because his superior linguistic competence, combined with his professional authority as the teacher, tends to create an imbalance and may inhibit the group's performance.

**Briefing**

No game or simulation will proceed smoothly if some of the players have not fully understood what is expected of them. For games, a written copy of the rules, clearly expressed and in simplified language if necessary, should be made available to each player, and the teacher would do well to check that the rules are properly understood before play begins.

Briefing for simulations can be given in a variety of forms. Some general information will be required in common by all the participants, and this can be presented through documents to be studied – narrative reports, maps, charts, timetables and so on, or as listening comprehension by means of a recording, or by a mixture of these.

In addition, certain information can be made available to some participants but not to others, and the most convenient device for this is the description of individual roles, one for each student.

Finally, reference material (statistics, balance-sheets and so on) can be made available for participants to consult if further facts are needed.

**The description and allocation of roles**

The following points apply only to simulations.

Participants' roles may be defined both according to functions (eg 'You are the store-detective'), opinions (eg 'You are very much in favour of the headmaster's proposal') and even traits (eg 'You are an impulsive person who instinctively

sympathises with underprivileged minority groups'). For the teacher to decide how far he should tamper with the 'normal' personality of each student is an extremely delicate matter, especially when strongly hostile emotions are brought into play. On the one hand, type-casting the participants is safe; but, by allotting a typical role, a greater proportion of challenge, inventiveness, and perhaps entertainment may be achieved.

In describing roles, one should suggest a few clear-cut attitudes or arguments to suit each participant (perhaps with alternatives). Further, there should be some indication what the individual participant is to prepare or invent for himself (eg 'Give at least three good reasons why you disagree with X' or 'Provide convincing facts and figures to support your point of view'). If this is not done, the less enterprising participants may not allude to anything that does not appear in their role-description, and much spontaneity will then be lost.

Again, for certain simulations, participants can be expected merely to be their real selves in the situation of solving a hypothetical, or even real, problem (eg 'You are going to hold a meeting to discuss how the quality and service of the college canteen can be improved'). Here the only 'unreal' element in the situation is that the discussion is to be conducted in English rather than in the mother-tongue.

**Correction of linguistic errors**

How much and how often to correct students' language errors during the course of play is another of the teacher's dilemmas. Where parlour-games are concerned, the teacher may be able to indicate mistakes and make corrections during the natural pauses in the game, or require the group of students to act as a watch-committee ready to correct one another. Nevertheless he may have to clarify in his own mind whether the linguistic objective is error-free language or successful communication, as this will affect the degree of correction required.

In the course of a simulation, the teacher may be tempted to intervene when mistakes are made, or even to introduce brief spells of remedial teaching. In general, this is unsatisfactory from several points of view; the student being corrected finds that his train of thought has been interrupted, while the teacher will probably find that the students are not paying full attention to his explanations but are anxious to proceed with the simulation. Experience has shown that it is better for the teacher to sit in the background with a note-pad, jotting down errors as they occur. It is usually convenient to timetable a remedial teaching lesson (immediately after the simulation ends) in which important mistakes can be discussed and remedial practice take place. Another possibility is to tape-record all or part of the simulation and play back the recording to the students afterwards, inviting them to identify their own mistakes as they listen.

**Conclusion**

Communication games and simulations have now acquired a new respectability in the field of foreign-language learning. Their importance as learning devices derives

from two main factors. First, they ensure that communication is purposeful (in contrast to the inescapable artificiality of so many traditional exercises and drills); and, secondly, they require an integrative use of language in which communicating one's meaning takes proper precedence over the mere elements of language-learning (grammar and pronunciation). In many cases such activities provide excellent opportunities to integrate skills: reading or listening to instructions; oral interchange; research-reading tasks; the preparation of personal notes; and so on. The results of that combination of factors are often extremely gratifying, motivation having been heightened and self-consciousness diminished in the learner; he can feel that his learning activities are at last approaching 'real-life language use'.

## USING SIMULATION IN TEACHING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Gill Sturtridge

THERE ARE many interpretations of the term 'simulation' and here the term is taken to mean, not playing roles, but the simulation of a whole environment in which is set a task or problem to which the participants react. The very nature of simulation makes it particularly suitable for use in the ESP class. First, it is obvious enough that a specific situation, task or problem with which the learner may later find himself faced, can be simulated in the classroom and thus give him both training and rehearsal in using the language he will later need. Secondly, at the oral stage of a simulation, the teacher is able to withdraw; this may be highly desirable when a group of qualified professionals are involved in a simulated professional discussion where the layman-teacher's participation would of necessity introduce layman's language. Thirdly, the structure of a simulation makes it attractive to the materials designer and teacher, as it allows for the integration of different types of learning materials and the practice of different skills.

Let us look at the three phases of a simulation (fig 1).

In Phase One the task is presented to the participants, who must understand the nature of the task, their own roles, particularly if role-cards are given out, and any constraints or rules that might be imposed. To set about the task, they need background information, for example technical data; and though sometimes it is desirable for some participants to have private access to specific information, it is essential that everyone participating has a minimum of common knowledge about

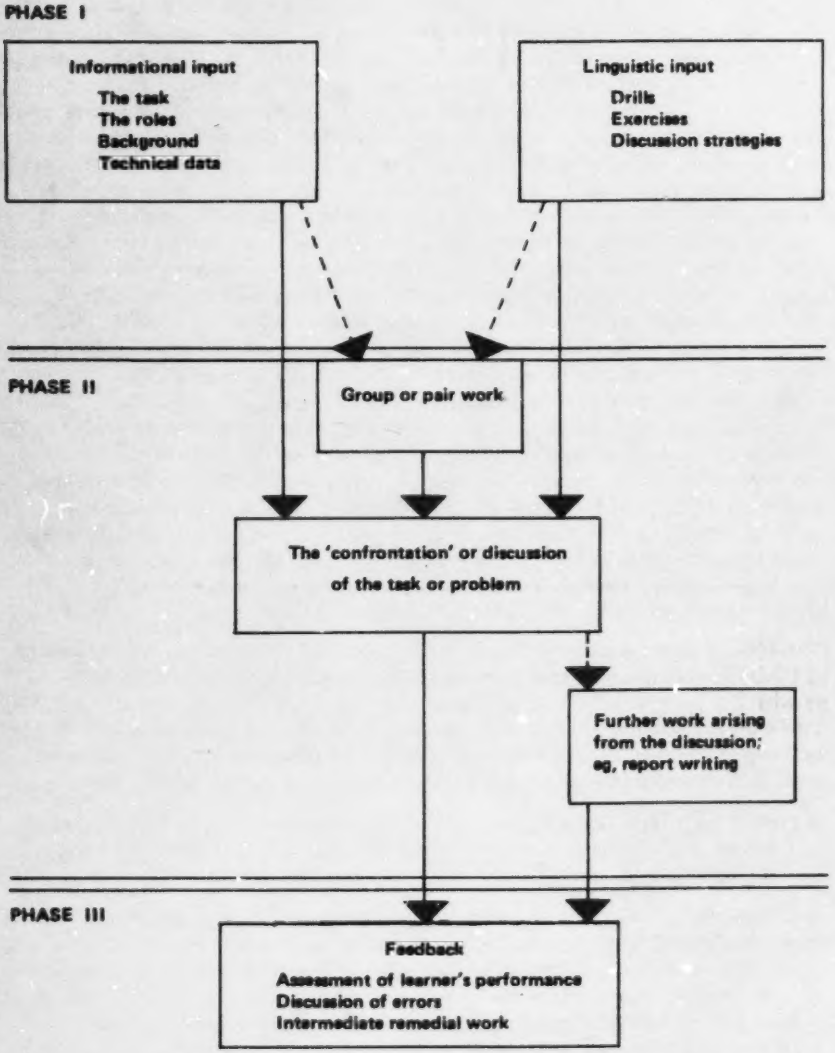


**Fig 1: The structure of a simulation**

the situation. The advantage of simulations is that different types of listening and reading exercises can be used to carry the information that the participants require. If the learner requires listening skills, the information he needs can be carried in listening comprehension and note-taking exercises, for example audio- or video-taped lectures, a conversation, or a telephone call. A wide variety of register can be used and the listening exercises can simulate the type of listening task that the learner will meet. If, on the other hand, it is reading skills in particular that need to be developed, the information can be carried in skim-reading exercises, reading-for-detail exercises, and so on. The participants can gather the information from tables, maps or graphs, and report back on what they have discovered. The exercises can be designed for the specific needs of the learner, and he himself is motivated, not only by recognising that he is practising skills he will use later, but by knowing that he is not merely 'doing exercises' but collecting information he can use at the oral stage of the simulation. As an illustration, I shall take a simulation used with postgraduate students of economics on a pre-university study skills course. The simulation was adapted from *Decisions: WestOil*[1], which was designed for British sixth-formers as a decision-making exercise. The task was to examine the distribution system of an oil company in a particular area, and to consider alternative systems. The participants were introduced to the imaginary company through a short guided listening comprehension exercise; this was reinforced by a memorandum which comes in the pack and presents the problem both in a letter and in a note form. There are no role-cards for this simulation; the participants were told that they were outside experts who were advising the company. Further listening-comprehension exercises, supported by slides from the pack's filmstrips, and the newspaper 'WestOil Scene' helped the participants through the high density of new lexis with which the ESP learner is so often faced.

This type of language exercise provides the participant with practice in certain skills and at the same time gives him something to talk about; however, it does not provide any practice in how he says what he wants to say. The majority of published simulations designed for English-language learning have a linguistic input at Phase One. Their designers 'predict' what the participants will want to say and provide drills and practice exercises in the language they think they will need.

In Phase Two it is not accuracy but fluency that is the objective, and the teacher is by turns monitor, manager and linguistic informant, and as such he finds he has to tolerate mistakes and curb his own desire to instruct and correct.

As a linguistic informant, he can intervene when requested. For example, the teacher in *WestOil* helped participants to find their way through the index, or glossed abbreviations. As manager, he intervenes to ensure that all the students are contributing, or to be the final arbiter on organisation within a group. However, it is the monitor role that is most important: it is on his observations of where the students are failing or succeeding that the teachers can base the work that is to be done after the simulation. It is valuable to audio- or video-tape a group discussion even in a large class, when only one group can be recorded. The teacher can keep

a monitor sheet for each group, noting not only errors but also what is not known; that is, what the students are trying to say but what they have to talk their way round with the language at their disposal. These monitor sheets, if kept over several simulations, are revealing record cards.

In some simulations, strategies or proposals are discussed in pairs or in small groups before the general discussion or 'confrontation'[1]. In WestOil the participants spent the major part of their time in groups of four, considering possible solutions, and finally reporting to a group of sixteen. The teams of four were carefully chosen to ensure that they were well-balanced mixed-ability groups. The vast amount of data the team had to sift demanded that even the weaker students made their contributions; they were given help in using the research materials in the pack, such as data-bank cards, and were able to report their findings to their team with the support of notes. The more able students helped the others and were selected by their colleagues to present the team's conclusion to the general discussion group.

Further work within the simulated situation can be included in Phase Two, for example the production of written work, a letter, or a report of the session. Participants may be required to make a report by telephone or to place an order.

Phase Three, the feedback stage, is in some ways the most valuable stage of the simulation, but it can also be the most difficult for the teacher to handle constructively. Published simulations often suggest that the participants listen to the recorded tapes or even repeat the same simulation after they have worked on the errors that were made.

Too often such a feedback session becomes tedious and negative with the emphasis on what was wrong. The learner then realises he has made many more mistakes than he thought at the time, when he felt he was communicating with some success. There is always an occasion when extracts from recordings can be profitably used in class; but more often the recordings, like the monitor sheet, are best used by the teacher as a guide to the students' needs. From these he can plan the language work which will most benefit the class as a whole, or choose an individualised programme for a particular learner. I suggest, therefore, that the linguistic input might more profitably come after the discussion, in Phase Three rather than before it, and that in this way it can be more closely based on what the students themselves want to communicate. There is some indication that language items practised immediately preceding a simulation are not often used, but that those same language items may well be used by the learner in later simulations after he has had time to assimilate them. It is, accordingly, valuable for the learner to participate in simulations at regular intervals.

Simulations should not be regarded merely as a 'fun' activity but as a structure that can carry materials which integrate listening, reading, writing and oral skills; they provide the learner with an opportunity to summon up and use all the language he has, which will extend far beyond what he has been 'taught'.

## ROLE-PLAY

Patricia Mugglestone

ROLE-PLAY WAS originally tried out in industrial and managerial training. It now connotes activities in the teaching of English as a foreign language ranging from 1. participation in everyday situations in which the learner plays himself in his everyday roles, eg 'The person in the room next to yours keeps you awake late at night with his record-player'[1] to 2. participation in specific dramatisations in a setting in which the learner plays a definite role and is assigned definite ideas and attitudes, eg 'You're Miss Emmett, a teacher. You teach Class Three at this school. You think uniforms are for the army: it's not right to make young people wear them'.[2]

All these activities (labelled *role-play*) share the same main aims and classroom procedures. Among the most important aims are 1. to provide the learner with a rehearsal for 'real life' and the roles he will have to assume outside the classroom (apparently an aim too seldom fulfilled), 2. to provide intensive oral practice in a relatively free and creative manner, and 3. to provide an opportunity to develop and test communicative competence. Role-play as a testing device is already used, in a modified form, in such examinations as the Cambridge First oral tests and the ARELS Diploma in Spoken English. The element of 'pretending' is eliminated if the learners are tested in a real situation, as Jupp and Hodlin suggest in Industrial English.[3]

Two reasons may explain why role-play is failing to achieve the first of those aims: the individual's role is often irrelevant; and the model of interaction the teacher has in mind is often irrelevant to the learner's future experience.

Each learner in role-play comes under one of four categories: 1. that of acting out a role he has performed in his L1 and will need to perform in English, eg being a guest or host at a party; 2. that of acting out a role he has performed in his L1 but is unlikely to need in English, eg being a husband or wife; 3. that of acting out a role he has not performed in his L1 but will need to perform in English, eg being a student about to become a postgraduate at a British university and needing to participate in tutorials and seminars; and 4. that of acting out a role he has not performed in his L1 and is unlikely to need in English, eg being a policeman.

A survey of role-play materials[4] shows how, writing for a mythical group of students and striving for interest and variety, the writer can create some irrelevant roles. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that he and his learners know which roles are the most relevant and to avoid treating all roles as equally significant.

A growing amount of interesting research concerns the characteristics of a situation[5], including factors affecting language use; eg status of participants, topic, locale, degree of formality and so forth, as well as such paralinguistic features as eye-contact, gesture, distance, facial expression and the like. As yet we lack a comprehensive system for applying this knowledge in the classroom, and we are left to rely on our individual intuitions; similarly with knowledge of the way in which cultural factors determine interaction. In 1963 Hall[6] pointed out that in an intercultural encounter the structural details of the two culture systems combine in one of three ways: 1. they can mesh, or complement each other, so that transaction continues or is reinforced; 2. they can clash, or interfere, which inhibits transaction; 3. they can be unrelated, thereby neither reinforcing nor inhibiting transaction.

For the practising teacher, there is no compendium of information about effects of cultural factors and little guidance as to how these should be taken into consideration in class; as a result, the teacher often ignores these factors in role-play.

Many teachers, following the maxim applied to the teaching of pronunciation ('teach your own model'), use their own model of interaction when correcting their learners' language and behaviour in role-play. If the teacher has no direct experience of the role-play situation – eg the shopfloor or the boardroom – he chooses a model of interaction usually from mass-media such as television (serials). To train the learner to interact like a native speaker of English is unfair to the learner in that 1. it ignores the participant's aims in interaction; social integration, gaining 'face' and achieving some specific goals;[7] and trying to be a native speaker probably hinders rather than helps the L2 speaker; 2. it ignores the listener's expectations: whether English is his first or second language, he will not expect the learner to speak and behave like a native speaker; 3. it ignores the fact that the English-speech community is international, establishing its own patterns of interaction.

Although we have information about interaction among native speakers, we need to study and analyse the other two dimensions (interaction among native speakers and L2 speakers as well as interaction among L2 speakers only), one implication of which is that the native speakers may need to learn the new model. Certainly teachers of English as a foreign language should replace their intuitive native-speaker model by a more relevant one.

NOTES

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## THE USE OF DRAMATIC TECHNIQUES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Alan Maley and Alan Duff

WHAT FOLLOWS is an account of the rationale behind the use of what can loosely be called 'dramatic techniques', followed by a few practical examples of such techniques. It arises from our attempts over the past three years to adapt the techniques of theatre games, as used in the mother-tongue context in primary/secondary schools and in actor training, to the foreign language classroom.

While it is certainly true that EFL materials have become much more interesting both for learner and teacher than was the case ten years ago, they still fail to satisfy on a number of counts. They are very largely external to the learner, failing to involve him as a person in his own learning. They rarely offer language which is needed for some immediate objective. They still start out from grammatical form rather than from appropriate use, even if this fact is often well-concealed. In other words, the learning of a foreign language remains for most people an intellectual affair from which real emotions are excluded. Yet it is only when we are able to operate affectively in a language, that we can truly be said to be using it. The dramatic techniques described here are an attempt to tap the affective resources of the learner, to restore the emotional content to language learning and to put back the body too!

There is a clear link between techniques such as these, which concentrate on what is being *done* rather than simply on what is being *said*, on appropriacy in use rather than formal accuracy, and the 'notional' ideas so much in the news in recent years. In fact, we have found it possible to predict which 'categories of communicative function' will be required for the successful completion of a given technique. This has proved a useful tool for the teacher both for preparation and follow-up to an activity.

Such techniques also require us to take into account the multi-dimensionality of a total situation. This will include not only the physical setting but also features such as status, rôle, the age of the participants in an exchange, the degree of shared knowledge, their attitudes etc.

We shall need to ask ourselves: Where am I? What can I see? What time of day is it? What's the weather like? How old am I? What do I feel like today? Who am I talking to? Do I know him well? Do I like him? Does he like me? What are we talking about and for what purpose? How much do we know about it? How much time have we to talk in?

All these factors have a bearing on what we actually say in a given situation. A situation is a totality, and by extracting simply the verbal content for study in isolation, we risk deforming meaning. Drama can help to restore this totality by reversing the process – by starting from meaning and moving to language.

From the evidence to hand there is little doubt that these techniques are an extremely powerful motivational factor. Stevick* has recently underlined the learner's need for a sense of 'belonging' (peer group acceptance) and security, and also to invest something of his own personality and so to enjoy a certain 'self-esteem'. These techniques fill precisely these needs.

Before proceeding to an examination of some of the more practical classroom considerations, a word of warning:

By dramatic techniques we do not mean acting out plays or sketches in front of the class. There may well be a place for the acting of a memorised text, but this is not it.

Neither should these techniques be considered a substitute for the psychoanalyst's couch. They are not intended to be therapeutic, although they will certainly release imagination and energy, and this is one of their purely *educational* values, far beyond the limited objectives of foreign language learning.

**Classroom considerations**

1 In classroom terms there are two possible strategies for using these techniques. The dramatic activity can be prepared for by careful presentation and practice of the language which it will require. This language is then used 'freely' in the activity. Alternatively the activity can be launched initially and the language needs which are revealed treated more systematically afterwards. In neither case are the dramatic activities alone sufficient. They do not enable the teacher to dispense with more formal teaching activities.

2 As these techniques will be unfamiliar to teacher and learner alike, it is best to introduce them gradually, as diversions, starting with those which make only modest demands on language and movement.

For example, *Back-to-back* can at one level be used simply to reinforce certain items of lexis and structure (nose, eyes, trousers etc/ He's got a . . . . . He's wearing a . . . . . ). Yet it provides an authentic reason for speaking.

As confidence is gained and learners realise that they are allowed to move about, some of the more demanding activities can be undertaken. Gradually the teacher can gauge how much of his class time can be given over to such activities.

* Earl Stevick: *Meaning, Memory and Method* (Newbury House 1976).

3 Almost all the activities require direct interaction between students. It is thus possible to generalise to some extent about the categories of language they will need:

a 'Transactional' language, that is language needed for getting things done in a group situation; eg

It's my turn.
Give it to me.
What did he say?
Let's start again. etc.

b 'Discussion' language, which is used to come to agreement about something, to describe, comment on or recall the activity in question etc; eg

He looks as if . . . . . .
She could be a . . . . . .
I don't think so.
i don't like that.
Oh, no; perhaps not.
We didn't understand why . . . . . .

c 'Performance' language, which is the end-product of the activity. In a sense this is the least important because it is the most self-consciously produced. In fact the authentically produced language is almost always found in the organisation and discussion stages, rarely in the performance stage.

If you adopt the strategy of preparation followed by activity, there is a very strong case for making sure that the basic categories of Transactional and Discussion language are taught fairly near the beginning of a course, in preference to the more obvious but less useful statements, such as 'This is a . . .'.

There are, of course, well-established practice procedures for doing this.

4 The traditional arrangement of chairs and tables or desks works against the successful use of dramatic activities. Ideally, the room should have no tables, and only a few chairs around the walls. If you cannot change the lay-out of your room, try to get another one; if this cannot be done, try to get the students to help you shift furniture out of the way. This may take time, but it is time well spent. Remember, too, that different activities require different arrangements. For some, you need a completely open space; for others, a semi-circle of chairs; and for others, groups of chairs.

Why all this fuss about 'open space'? First, as will be immediately apparent, the activities require room because of the movement involved. Second, it is essential to be able to see whom you are talking to, and to be able to move towards or away

from him, to touch him or be touched. After all, when we talk we should be trying to communicate (not just 'answer questions'). How can you do this if all you can see is the backs of other peoples heads.

The physical lay-out of the room reflects a psychological reality. For many people, rows of desks and chairs represent order and discipline; scattered groups of chairs or people squatting on the floor represent disorder and lack of control. This is one of the real reasons why many teachers oppose the idea of working in groups. They feel that the students have somehow escaped from their control and that this is, at least potentially, dangerous. This is not one of the objections which are publicly advanced; these are normally of the type: 'It takes too long to organise' – 'They make too much noise' – 'How can I correct them?' – 'How can I give them the language they need' – 'How can I get them to talk English together?' etc. But such reasons for objecting are as often as not a reflection of the unease teachers feel at having the 'order' of the classroom upset.

The practical difficulties of working in this freer way can be greatly reduced by observing a few simple rules:

- before trying out a new activity, ask the students to suspend judgement until it is over;

- give precise and unambiguous instructions for each activity; make sure everyone knows who his partner is, which group he is working in, what he is expected to do, etc;

- if materials (such as pictures, objects) are needed, make sure they are provided;

- keep close control over the time; avoid the temptation of letting an activity outgrow its own limitations: the saying that one should always leave the table feeling one could eat more is relevant here as well – it is better to stop too early than too late;

- decide what your own role is going to be; how much are you going to intervene (if at all)?

The advantages of working in groups, pairs, or flexible groupings are enormous:

- the student/teacher relationship improves, because the teacher is no longer the 'fount of knowledge', he is the guide rather than the controller-in-chief;

- students talk more than before, and their exchanges are, as far as possible, natural;

- students participate in their own learning process;

– students gain from the sense of security offered by the group – individual talents are shared, everyone has a contribution to make, however small; weaker students often reveal unsuspected abilities, stronger students find themselves sharing what they know rather than trying to outdo their fellows.

The major difficulty which most teachers face, consciously or not, is how to transform the classroom from a space which is inherently inimical to learning into one where learning can take place. This problem is even greater for the language teacher: he needs to teach *communication* in a language, yet he is obliged to work in a classroom. The activities described here are one way of helping him overcome this problem.

5 When an activity is going well, it is tempting to let it run on unchecked. You will, however, find it best to cut it off somewhat prematurely. There will be cries of 'But we haven't finished yet' etc, but this should not worry you. The slight tension and frustration thus created often finds an outlet in talking *about* what was not done but might have been if they had been allowed to go on. So what you lose in 'performance' language is more than made up for by the language which emerges in these unplanned discussions.

6 There will always be one or two students who will not cooperate. Some will be genuinely shy, others will react to what they consider a waste of time, either by withdrawing or by over-participating, thus upsetting the work of the others.

There is no magic formula for dealing with difficult students of either type – the silent or the over-boisterous. The best approach is, usually, to go on with your activity, paying no special attention to such students. Often the group itself will take care of the problem. Shy students, in particular, gain confidence once they begin working pairs or small groups, especially if they are given discreet encouragement or praise; those who have decided to drop out often find themselves pressed to change their minds by others in their group.

Group pressures may also put down the student who wants to 'ham' or overdo everything. If this fails, you might try the reverse strategy; turn everyone's attention fully on him by saying, eg 'Oh, that was interesting, could you do it again for us all?' Obliged now to think about what he is doing, such a student often realises for himself that he cannot go on for long in the same way.

If there are times when you are worried by persistent non-cooperation by one or two students, remember that there will be non-participation with more traditional techniques as well – it is simply that such techniques make it easier to camouflage inactivity.

7 It is inevitable that students will at times revert to their own language. When we get excited, it is most natural for us to express this through our mother tongue.

When you begin trying to use the activities described in this article, do not try to stifle genuine reactions by insisting too heavily on the use of the foreign tongue. Let the activity develop. It often helps to keep students moving from group to group, as this prevents them from getting too deeply caught up in conversations in their own tongue. Even one student, sent round as a 'reporter' to each group, can have the effect of persuading them to use the foreign tongue.

With time, the students will come to associate the activities with the foreign tongue and will have less difficulty in accepting its use. After all, they accept it in structural drills and comprehension exercises, so why not here? They know that they have come to learn the foreign language and it would be pointless not to use it. The decision by the students to use the foreign language instead of their own is a reflection of the confidence you have bred in them.

From what has gone before, it must be clear that in order to use these techniques successfully there has to be a radical change in the relationship between teacher and learner. A relaxed atmosphere is essential. Re-arranging the layout of the room will help, but it will still be necessary to alter the learners' ideas (and the teachers') about what he is there for. He will no longer be sole arbiter of good/bad, right/wrong. His function is to set things in motion and to monitor them from a distance. To control but not to direct.

The temptation to intervene when something seems to be going wrong, and when silence falls, should be resisted. Periods of silence are necessary and natural. Too hasty intervention can deprive the student of time to think.

It is well to remember, too, that there can be no ways of doing things which are 'wrong' in the absolute sense. There will be grammatical mistakes, but these can be dealt with in the more formal sessions. Learners should feel free to react and interact spontaneously without feeling that they will be penalised.

In brief, the teacher should learn to withdraw, while making it clear he is there when, but only when, he is needed.

**Classroom techniques**

The techniques described below are in a roughly graded sequence. The first two require a relatively restricted command of the language and have as their 'dramatic' purpose training in observation. The second two develop skills of interpretation and require correspondingly more complex language. The final two launch the lecturer into real interactional activities where only part of the communicative categories, those relating to discussion, are predictable.

**Back-to-back**

a What to do

Ask the students to walk round the room looking at each other and trying to notice as many details of appearance as possible.

After 2–3 minutes suddenly tell them to stand back-to-back with the person nearest to them. One member of each pair should then describe his partner's appearance to him. Without looking round, the other partner should do the same.

When being described, the students should neither confirm nor refute what their partners say. They may, however, try to elicit further information; eg

A. You're wearing a blue sweater.
B. Light blue or dark blue?

A. You've got a watch.
B. On which hand?

When this has been done they should turn round and compare what they said with 'the truth'.

b Useful language

i Identifying

You're wearing . . . . . .
You've got (a blue cardigan).
Your X is Y (hair is green/shoes are dirty etc).
There's an X on your Y (ring/finger).
It's X (red/made of silver etc).

ii Stating whether or not someone recalls information

I didn't remember (the colour).
You forgot/missed (my badge).
I didn't get (the trousers).
I knew it was (long).

iii Correcting (including self-correcting)

Oh, I thought/said it was . . .
So it wasn't (a blouse).
No, the (cardigan) was (green).
And (my hair) isn't (blonde); it's (grey).

iv Expressing/enquiring about how certain/uncertain one is of something

– I think/thought . . . . . .

I'm not quite sure but . . .
It could be . . .
They must be . . . . . .
I know you have . . .
No, wait a minute, it might be . . .
Isn't it . . . . . .?
Haven't you . . .?
Is there?
Have they (etc)?
Are you sure?
Do you really think so?

c Remarks

What you are doing here is to turn a familiar situation into an unfamiliar one by a simple twist. If you had simply asked each person to describe the other face-to-face, boredom would rapidly have set in. In this way you create a tension which is sustained until the moment of 'revelation' when the partners turn to face each other. It is in this moment of revelation that the the tension is suddenly released, and the language with it. This is what we want.

You will notice that the students spontaneously comment on what they have said earlier. The immediacy of such a reaction is extremely difficult to achieve convincingly in other ways; eg through imitation in a dialogue.

This exercise is something of a shock tactic. Clearly it cannot be done more than 2–3 times in a year. Nevertheless, it is a good and amusing preparation for similar exercises in which one is required to observe and later comment upon one's observations.

**Kim's game**

a What to do

Collect a number of disparate objects – about 15 in all. Typical objects might be: a toothbrush, a light-bulb, a packet of aspirin, a railway ticket, a bank-note, a screwdriver, etc. If you have a class of between 20–30 pupils, you will need to prepare two sets of objects, some of which, if possible, should be the same.

Place these objects on a table (or on two tables for classes over 20), so that everyone can see them. Let the students examine the objects for not more than 3 minutes. Then tell them to go off and jot down as many as they can remember. While they are writing, cover the objects and, at the same time, remove some or alter them slightly. When you notice that the students are beginning to chew their pens, ask them how many objects they thought there were on the table. Ask, also, if anyone thinks he has remembered them all. Now let them come back and check

their lists against the objects. There will be cries of 'The screwdriver's missing' – There wasn't a matchbox before' – 'The soap's been unwrapped' etc. As they mention the objects, return them to the table or remove them so that the original set of objects remains.

The students should now study the objects carefully for detail. Tell them to concentrate particularly on size, shape, colour, special markings, etc. Give them 3 minutes again, then tell them to go off and work with a partner to try and constitute a new list (without referring to the old one) which would include as much detail as possible. They should work together, noting where they agree and disagree. Each should write out his own list. After 5 minutes, tell them to change partners even if they are not yet ready. They should now check their list against that of their new partner.

b Useful language

i Correcting

Oh, and we said it was . . . . . !
You see, it was (a ballpoint).
It's not (sllver), it's (steel).
There are/were (no buttons).
But we haven't got (15) yet.

ii Asking

What was it made of?
What (colour) was it?
How big was it?
Was it (smooth)?

iii Expressing agreement and disagreement

| | |
|---|---|
| No, it wasn't. | Yes, it was. |
| I don't agree. | Yes, that's right. |
| I think you're wrong. | I suppose so. |
| Never. | I think so too. |
| Are you sure? | |

iv Stating/inquiring about whether someone remembers something or not

We didn't get (the ring).
We forgot (the knife).
As far as I remember (the knife was broken).
(The ballpoint was longer than the pen,) wasn't it?
Can you remember if (the stamp had been used);
How many did you remember?
Did you get (the plastic Buddha)?

v Expressing/inquiring how certain one is of something

It might have had (a stamp).
I'm not certain whether (the pen was blue).
Are you sure (about the keys)?

vi Confirming/checking up

Ah yes. It was (black).
That's what I thought.
You see, we *said* it was (oval).
You've (taken away the coin), haven't you?

c Remarks

A collection of everyday objects on a table is of little interest in itself. However, as we have seen in the previous exercise, as soon as the familiar is temporarily removed from sight it becomes interesting. With this game, the interest can usually be sustained for a long time, which means that the activity can be taken at a fairly leisurely pace to allow the students time to go thoroughly into what they can remember.

It is interesting that much of the language will involve the simple repetition of the nouns that correspond to the objects on the table. In order to discuss the details, the students need only a few adjectives, comparatives and contrastive phrases. If they do not know a word, eg 'chipped', they should be encouraged to find their own way of explaining it. The chances are that they will hear it when comparing lists with another student. If not, they will probably ask you of their own accord at the end of the game.

**The hotel receptionist**

a What to do

To begin with, try this activity out with the class as a whole. Explain to them that they are in a hotel (not necessarily in England, but at least in a country where they would need to communicate to the receptionist through English) and that they have temporarily lost the power of speech. There are various things they may wish or need to tell the receptionist, but to do so they can use only gestures. They can of course understand all the receptionist's comments, questions, and replies, but they cannot respond to him in words.

The first two or three times it is best for the 'animateur' to play the receptionist, but he should encourage the whole class to help him in trying to work out what the voiceless guest wants. A list of suggestions for use in the game will be found below. Once the students have grasped the ideas, they can be divided into groups of 5–7. Each person in the group will be given a slip of paper on which is written something

he wants or needs; eg 'I can't turn off the hot water in my room. Can you come quick!' He will try to demonstrate to the 'receptionist' what he wants, but in fact the whole group will take an active part in the guessing. For this reason it is important that the group sit in a rough horseshoe, with the guest and the receptionist at the two ends, in full view of everyone. The 'animateur' will be kept on his toes, because it is important that the students be given no time to reflect on their ideas. This means that the slips of paper should be handed out only when a group is ready to receive a new 'guest'.

The ideas given below are far from exhaustive. Teachers should have little difficulty making up their own; they might even like to take sentences from their textbooks, which, out of context, would take on fresh meaning. One point, however, should be observed: it is the *details* which are most difficult to guess and which therefore produce the essential language work. So, for instance, if a student has 'I've lost a small ginger Pekinese, with his name on the collar . . . . . ', make sure that the 'receptionist' is not satisfied simply with knowing she has lost a dog.

The students will also need to be trained to summarise the message once they think they have worked it out. This is the task of the person in the 'receptionist's' chair, who should say, eg 'So you've lost a small ginger Pekinese . . . etc' or 'Then you're trying to find . . . . . '.

Finally, the 'guest' should read out exactly what is written on the slip of paper. This is extremely important because it shows the students how the original idea has been transformed.

b Useful language

i Identifying;
ii asking;
iii expressing and inquiring about whether something is a logical conclusion;
iv self correction.

c Remarks

Certain changes may, however, be needed. This activity is suited to various age-levels and levels of ability. For younger learners, for instance, it will be necessary to alter the basic situation so that the actions are more restricted; instead of trying to communicate with a hotel receptionist, they might eg ask questions of a policeman, try to explain something to a holiday-camp leader, etc. No matter what the form may be, however, the pattern of the language work will remain the same. That is, the student will be converting a message in the first person ('I'd like stamps for a letter to Finland') into gesture, and will be receiving questions in the second person ('Ah, you want to post a letter'). Many of the questions will, inevitably, be statements with an interrogative intonation; the teacher should not feel that these are incorrect, for they belong naturally to this particular register of English.

You will notice, if you listen carefully, that a great deal of repetition is involved. The final sentence is built up, brick by brick, in something like the following way:

– Stamps?
– You want to post a letter?
– You've written a letter?
– You want to write a letter? No?
– Have you written a letter?
– Well, where do you want to send it?
– Far away?
– China?
– Scandinavia? Ah, Finland!
– So you want stamps for a letter to Finland?

Once the students have picked up the technique, they will be able to handle the game almost unaided and will often come up with ideas of their own.

Suggested sentences:

Please can I have breakfast in bed tomorrow morning?
What's the postage for a letter to Russia?
I can't turn the hot water off in my room. Can you come quickly?
Is there a TV room here?
I'd like to be woken at 0645 tomorrow.
Can I change dollars here?
How do I get to the nearest underground station?
Have you got the right time? My watch seems to have stopped.
How long does it take to get from here to the airport by bus?
I'm looking for a Chinese restaurant. Is there one near here?

**Tableaux**

a What to do

Divide the class into groups of four. Announce a theme to the class; eg searching, waiting, complaining. Each group should now work out a tableau in mime around the theme. Remind the students that it is important for each character to have a clearly-defined role. So, for instance, if four people were waiting to see the vet, we should be able to tell what kind of animal each one had brought and what kind of person he or she was – anxious, talkative, withdrawn, etc.

Give the groups ten minutes to discuss their idea and five minutes to prepare it for presentation. After fifteen minutes, the tableaux are presented successively. After each one, the members of the other groups try to analyse what they have seen.

b Useful language

i Suggesting a course of action;
ii instructing or directing others to do something;
iii asking;
iv expressing agreement or disagreement;
v expressing how certain or not one is of something;
vi expressing pleasure/liking, displeasure/dislike;
vii expressing satisfaction/dissatisfaction;
viii expressing approval/disapproval.

c Remarks

Here the students receive the minimum of instructions. What they do depends almost entirely on their collective resources of imagination. They are, however, working around the same theme. This is important because it means that they will take a natural interest in each other's work. Remember that the language objective here is to encourage them to work *together* and *to comment on each other's work.* Their interest, however, will be focussed on the development of the idea and on the performance. Ideally, they should not realise that the performance itself is only of secondary importance.

On the whole, it is preferable not to ask the groups to perform too often before the whole class, as this usually leads to over-stylisation and self-consciousness. In order to avoid this you should be adamant about the time limits so as to keep the groups working under constant pressure. There will certainly be complaints of 'But we haven't finished . . . . . .' and pleas for 'Just another minute' and the groups will probably grumble that their performance would have been better if they had had more time. Let them grumble. You will notice, as they do so, that a good deal of useful language will emerge, involving structures such as: 'If there had been time, we'd have . . .' – 'We meant to show . . .' – 'We were really trying to . . .' etc.

For the next two exercises you might like to work out for yourself the predictably necessary categories of communicative function.

**Split dialogues**

2 What to do

1 Prepare a number of two-line exchanges, with each part written on a separate slip of paper. (See examples below) Mix the slips and distribute them at random so that every student has one. Each student should *memorise* what is written on his slip of paper, then go round to all the other members of the class trying to find those who have sentences which 'fit' his, eg those who sentences make a coherent (logical and grammatical) exchange. Even if they think they have found the 'right' partner, they should continue to look for others. After five minutes or so, ask everyone to

sit in a circle. One student begins by saying his sentence. Anyone else who has a sentence which goes with it should respond. There will probably be several proposals. Continue round the circle until everyone has had a turn.

2 An alternative possibility is to divide the class into groups of even numbers of up to eight students. If there are eight students in a group, take four two-line exchanges, mix them, and hand them at random to the student. Then adopt the same procedure as in 1°, ie each student tries to find out who has a sentence which will fit his. As soon as the students have paired off, they should work out with their partners extended version of the dialogue so as to make its context absolutely clear. Within the groups, each pair of students takes it in turn to perform for the others, with criticism and comment where appropriate.

b Remarks

This is an extremely rich exercise which will well repay the extra time you spend on it. What the students are being asked to do is to compare sentences for appropriacy, which inevitably involves them in comparing some of the possible contexts in which they could occur. This is a central problem in language teaching – how to recognise an utterance for what its speaker intended it to be, and to respond appropriately.

The exercise lays bare the fact that one sentence may have many possible meanings, depending on the sentences it occurs with. (This should become clear when the students are in the circle calling out their sentences.)

If there is time, you may also wish to take exercise 2° a step further by giving all the students in any one group the same dialogue and asking them in pairs to extend it. The same original dialogue will look very different when extended in different ways in different contexts.

(Suggested exchanges:

(You can't go in there, I'm afraid.
(Oh? Who says so?

(For goodness sake stop picking your nose!
(Why don't you stop criticising?

(You know what I feel like now?
(No, what?

(Do you realise that this is a non-smoker?
(Is it? So what?

(I've come to read the meter.
(Oh, I see, well . . . er . . . come in then

(Will that be all, sir?
(I think so. No, wait a minute.

(Oh. I'm so fed up.
(Not again surely?

(Any chance of Shirley helping?
(She might.

**Building sketches from mime, pictures, sounds and newspapers**

2 What to do

1 Divide the class into four groups. Each group should decide on one *object* to mime. When they have made up their minds, *one* member of each group goes to the next group and mimes the object for them until they guess it. He now remains with this group until the end. Each group now decides upon an *action* to mime. Again, one member of each group goes to the next group and mimes the action until they guess it. He now remains with this group until the end. Finally, each group decides upon a *character* to mime. Again, one member of each group goes to the next, mimes the character and remains with the group. Each group has now collected two objects, two actions and two characters (the ones they invented and the ones they were shown by a member of another group). They must now work out a short sketch which involves these two objects, actions and characters. The sketch will be spoken, though the mime will be incorporated.

2 Divide the class into groups of five. Give each group the picture of an unknown person. Each group should work out as much detailed information as it can about the person. One member of the group notes down this information. The groups then pass their picture to the next group and do the same thing with the new picture. They then pass on their pictures again and to the same. Each group has now discussed *three* characters in detail. They should now work out a brief sketch in which these three characters figure.

3 Divide the class into groups of five. Tell each student to make a brief note of what he is about to hear. Now play a tape-recording of three or four different isolated sounds (eg a dog barking, a glass breaking, footsteps, a heavy splash). The groups now have to combine these sounds into a brief sketch.

4 Divide the class into groups of five. Take two or three English newspapers (preferably tabloids) into the class and tear them into random pieces about 6" x 6" (15 cm x 15 cm). Mix these up and give three or four pieces to each group. They can select any three *items* they find on these pieces of newspaper around which to construct a short sketch. (An 'item' may be a headline, part of an advertisement, a single word, or a sentence taken from an article).

5 To prepare for this activity, you should collect a number of *short* news flashes which contain the germ of an interesting situation.

Divide the class into groups of five and give each group one of these news flashes. They are to imagine that they are TV interviewers who are going out to interview the principal characters involved in the incident. The groups should prepare the questions they would ask. The roles of the principal characters and the interview should then be assigned, and the interview conducted. Anyone who is not directly involved in the interview should act as the TV news director who will be praising or criticising the programme when it is finished.

B Remarks

These five exercises are essentially the same, in that they take a number of random stimuli which have to be incorporated in a coherent dramatised story-line. Once again, the discussion which precedes and accompanies these activities is at least as important as the successful performance of them, for it is *there* that the conditions for real interchange are created.

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SPOLIN, Viola: **Improvisation for the Theatre.** Pitman

WAY, Brian: **Development through Drama.** Longman.

**Postscript**
**P B Early**

THIS ISSUE of *ELT Documents* has focussed on communication games, simulation, role-play, and dramatic techniques. In these concluding remarks, I would like to raise one or two questions relating to the place of these techniques in the current semantically oriented approach to foreign-language teaching and learning.

It seems to me that we still stand in need of definitions. Simulation, role-play and dramatic techniques are terms which tend to be used interchangeably by many foreign-language teachers. Simulation, I suggest, might be best reserved for use as a general, superordinate term for that mode of learning which is often applied to the acquisition of complex psychomotor skills in carefully controlled artificial conditions, such as, say, learning to fly jet-planes. In such a situation, the learner acquires and consolidates skills by actually performing them in conditions which constrain him to simulate the desired target behaviour but without fear of the consequences of a lapse or miscalculation. Such a learning model has obvious application to language-teaching/learning, where the aim is appropriate and fluent communication. The consequences of a social gaffe are likely to be less costly, but no less painful, than those of crashing a jet.

Role-play is one way of simulating communicative behaviour, but there are others, such as motivated listening, project-work, or communication games of certain types. What such activities have in common is that they engage the cognitive faculties of the learner, and often his emotions too, in terms of an overall communicative purpose or intent, which has to be credible enough to hold his attention. If the right level of credibility can be attained, then the learner gets first interested, and then thoroughly involved, in the communication task that he has been set.

There is a danger, perhaps, of assuming that getting a student to 'perform his competence' – as in role-play – is the same as actually *building* his competence. Gill Sturtridge, in this issue of *ELT Documents,* rightly stresses the importance of careful monitoring and feedback procedures in getting pupils to simulate specific target behaviour. Simulated behaviour is usually characterised by cognitive and emotional involvement in the participant. It is difficult, if not impossible, for the learner performing in simulated 'real time' to step back from this involvement in order to monitor his own performance in a detached manner as it is proceeding. Simulated activities in foreign-language learning are good for motivation and for developing complex and coordinated performance skills (such as listening to a verbal message *in order to* respond). To be fully effective, however, they need to be carefully integrated into the teaching/learning cycle.

In the case of role-play, for example, there seem to be two main approaches. In one approach, role-play is a central activity – the principal teaching device. Savignon (1972) introduces role-play early in the teaching of French and uses it to identify student problems and to teach appropriate language. A second approach, adopted by Johnson and Morrow (197?), situates role-play at a late stage in the practice cycle, where the student practises language in whole interactions that he has previously practised in isolation. In a functionally arranged syllabus, covering, say, Greetings, Introducing, Giving Directions, and Farewells (in turn), it is not difficult to set up a role-play using all these functions in sequence. One advantage of introducing role-play early on in the language-learning cycle, on the other hand, is that it serves to focus the learner's attention on the specific communication problems he needs to tackle in order to be able to communicate effectively. The introduction of new language items, or the revision of old, can then be made by the teacher in function of a perceived need in the learner.

In the same way, many of Maley and Duff's 'Dramatic Techniques', described in this issue of *ELT Documents,* have obvious value in preparing the learner to meet the emotional demands of taking part in interactive learning processes. And it is in this context, as Maley and Duff point out, that the use of small group work can be most effective in reducing the psychological isolation of the individual participant, and getting him to use language unselfconsciously for getting things done, or for discussing what should be done. The techniques the authors advocate have nothing to do with students acting out plays, or sketches, in front of a class, and everything to do with developing students' ability to react with a total communicative response to all the features present in a given situation. Thus, dramatic techniques for the foreign-language teacher do not necessarily, or even desirably, lead to a performance (with a capital P). The learner is not so much learning to act out an alien role for the benefit of a third party, but to act, indeed to be himself, in a foreign language.

There is little doubt that many of the techniques proposed in this issue of *ELT Documents* make great demands on foreign-language teachers and learners alike, reaching, as they do, to new cognitive and affective levels of the individual.

We have known for a long time that foreign-language students prefer on the whole to talk to some purpose – to communicate with someone in particular about something in particular in an identifiable and credible context of circumstances – rather than merely to exercise the vocal organs. (If Eliza Doolittle lived today, she would scarcely be expected to pass muster in London society on her straightened-out vowels alone; she would have to graduate to social acceptance via a course entitled 'Grade Simulations in Social Interactions', or something similar.) It would seem that at last we are beginning to see a range of powerful and effective devices which will engineer authentic – or near-authentic – communication in the classroom.

## FURTHER READING

**STURTRIDGE, Gill:** 'Using Simulation in Teaching English for Specific Purposes' (in this issue of *ELT Documents*).

**SAVIGNON, S J:** Communicative Competence: An Experiment in FL Teaching. Philadelphia, 1972.

**JOHNSON & MORROW:** Communicate: The English of Social Interaction. Centre for Applied Language Studies, University of Reading.

**MALEY & DUFF:** 'The Use of Dramatic Techniques in Foreign Language Learning' (in this issue of *ELT Documents* and book, from Cambridge University Press, forthcoming in 1977).

## SELECTION OF ARCHIVES ACCESSIONS FOR 1976

**October**

| | |
|---|---|
| Czechoslovakia | Clifford, Paula. Report on a course held at Olomouc, 4–18 September 1976. 3 pp. |
| France | Maley, A. Report on courses in drama in ELT (P Berry, Sèvres). September 1976. |
| Greece | Laskaridou, D. Report on English language training of civil servants in Greece, 1975–6. 2 pp. |
| Iran | Yarmohammadi, L. English-Persian language problems in technological and scientific subjects in Iran. 29 pp. Received October 1976. |
| Philippines | Apilado-Bersola, G. English language programmes in colleges of science and technology in the Philippines. Paper given at the Tenth Regional Seminar (RELC). April 1975. (In Conferences file.) |
| Poland | Report on course for second-year students of English philology in Polish universities, Poznan. August 1976. 10 pp. |
| Sudan | Thornhill, J E M. Report on the Sudan Education Seminar on Language Teaching and Methodology for Secondary Teachers of English. 1976. |
| Yugoslavia | Shorter, J, and Hammond, C. Report on Croatian Republican Seminar for Primary School Teachers of English (held at Bol). August–September 1976. 4 pp. |
| General | Shorter, J. Role-playing in language teaching. 8 pp. Received October 1976. |

**November**

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| Brunei | Report on 1976 BATEFL Conference (held at Brunei Teachers' College). 17 October 1976. 5 pp. |
| Ghana | Report on the English language testing for British Council scholarships. Athens, October 1976. 4 pp. |

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| Lesotho | Lesotho English Syllabus for Junior Certificate examination, 1977. |
| RELC | Preparing a model for syllabus design in English Language teaching. A workshop paper from Eleventh Regional Seminar (RELC), July–August 1975. 16 pp. |
| Switzerland | Education profile of Switzerland. October 1976. 30 pp. |
| General | Papers from British Council ESP Seminar held at ELTI, March 1976. 117 pp. ESP Course Planning: suggested checklist of relevant questions for eliciting basic data. (Roe, P J: English for special purposes: Analysis of the variables. A statement on ESP. Widdowson, H: Notes on talks given on the rhetorical approach to the teaching of English for academic purposes. White, R V: English for academic purposes: Constructing programmes. Phillips, M K, and Shettlesworth, C C: ESP materials: A comparative case study. Higgins, J J: Diagnosing student needs. Cooper, M D: University of Malaya English for Special Purposes Project . . . Report. Jordan, R R: English for academic purposes: Economics.) |

**December**

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| Austria | Milne, J Report on two courses on the teaching of composition (held at Mariazell), 7–12 and 14–19 November 1976. 2 pp. |
| Botswana | Report on English Teaching Workshop, Gaborone Secondary School, 13–15 January 1976. 3 pp. |
| | Marsh, Gillian B. Report on the intensive English Pilot Project at Madiba Secondary School . . . February 1976. 5 pp. Initial and intensive English course for Form One students, 15 October 1975 (attached). 3 pp. |
| Germany | Geddes, Marion, and Sturtridge, Gill. Report on ELTI/Bremen Listening Comprehension Workshop, 28–30 October 1976. 4 pp. |
| | Gerighty, T J. Report on a course for teachers of English in vacational training schools (held at Altenberg), 29 November to 3 December 1976. 3 pp. |
| Jordan | Courses offered at the English Department of Jordan University, Updated. Received December 1976. 2 pp. |
| Netherlands | Material from course on English listening comprehension. December 1976. 57 pp. |

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| Oman | The Royal Guard Regiment. English classes. List of coursebooks Updated. Received December 1976. 4 pp. |
| Portugal | Stoney, K G. Report on Summer School for Teachers of English (held at Evora), 20 September to 10 October 1976. |
| Sudan | Jeans, Mary. Atbara Institute of Mechanical Engineering Technicians . . . Technical English Syllabus. January 1976. 65 pp. |
| Venezuela | Thomas, M E. Report on the British Council ELT course for teachers of English in secondary schools in the Tachira region (held at Rubio). 23 August to 9 September 1976. 4 pp. Note on recommendations (attached). 3 pp. |
| Yemen | English Language Syllabus 1976–77 for preparatory schools in the Yemen. September 1976. 6 pp. |
| | English Language Syllabus 1976–77 for secondary schools in the Yemen. September 1976. 10 pp. |
| | Ewart, J D. Open letter to English teachers in Yemen: on teaching notes. September 1976. 4 pp. |

**The Teaching of Spoken English** is the subject of an international conference to be held at the University, Leeds, between 15 and 20 August 1977. The speakers will include A C Gimson, P D Strevens, J D O'Connor, J Windsor Lewis and E L Tibbitts. Proposals are invited from those who would like to present papers to section meetings (time-limit, per paper, fifteen minutes). Titles and summaries (maximum length: 200 words) should be sent to the organisers as soon as possible. The full programme is available from: The Director of Special Courses, Special Courses Division, Department of Adult Education and Extramural Studies, The University, Leeds LS2 9JT.

**English for Academic Purposes** is the title of a collection of papers on the language problems of overseas students in higher education in the United Kingdom edited by A P Cowie and J B Heaton and published by BAAL and SELMOUS in combination. The book includes edited versions of a paper given at a conference held at the University of Birmingham in 1975. Contributions both theoretical and practical deal with various language problems encountered by students and teachers. The three parts into which the book is divided discuss the identification and assessment of students' needs, the design of syllabuses and special courses, and course-components. An appendix presents 'The current programme of materials development in English for academic purposes at the Universities of Birmingham and Aston' (T F and C M Johns).

**Information Systems and Networks.** A conference on this subject is to be held in Luxembourg between 3 and 6 May 1977. Problems arising from establishment of Euronet, an organisation supplying scientific, technical and economic information from various sources, will be considered; and the evolution of multi-lingual systems is to be discussed from the standpoint of policymakers and users.

Two of the five conferences planned for the Center of Applied Linguistics **Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives in Bilingual Education** were held in the summer of 1976. The first, held between 8 and 9 June, concentrated on social science perspectives; and the second, held between 13 and 14 August, dealt with language and linguistics and their bearing on bilingual education.

**FIPLV (the Thirteenth World Congress)**, to be held at Lucerne between 27 March and 1 April 1978, will cover a number of themes, among them the needs of the individual in different learning situations and interdisciplinary cooperation in teaching foreign languages. (That the International Association for the Study and

Promotion of Audio-Visual and Structuro-Global Methods (AIMAV) will be working in closer cooperation generally with FIPLV is regarded as probable.)

**Vacation Course in English for Overseas University and Polytechnic Students.** This twelve-week course, to be held at Cardiff University English Centre for Overseas Students, will be held between 12 July and 23 September 1977. It is designed for overseas students who have some command of English but require upgrading in oral and written English to meet the needs of postgraduate and undergraduate courses. Special attention is given to the development of the technical and professional vocabularies required by students entering science, applied science, business and commerce, social sciences, and education. Tuition fees: £240 (includes books and course visits). Accommodation: £11 per week (self-catering); lodging £18 (lodging: bed, breakfast, evening meal and Sunday luncheon). Inquiries should be addressed to: The Director, Cardiff University English Centre for Overseas Students, c/o Faculty of Education, University College, Cardiff CF1 1XL.

**Language and Linguistics**

EDWARDS, A D
**Language in culture and class**
Heinemann Educational, 1976 206 pp £5.50

Provides sociologically oriented guidance to what people's language can tell one about them. Detailed examples introduce the main concepts and findings, which are applied to: the extent of class difference in communication; the educational consequences of this; and classrooms considered as contexts for the use of language. The book should interest language specialists, educationists and students. A useful bibliographical index is appended.

LUNT, Helen (editor)
**Language and language teaching: Current research in Britain 1972–75**
Longman, 1976 259 pp £6.25

This is the principal project-by-project register of work in this country on language, linguistics and language teaching maintained at the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research and designed to be of special use to researchers, teachers, administrators, curriculum developers and advisers. Of the 763 projects described, 423 are recorded since 1972. The new appendix gives information about projects completed or discontinued since 1971–72; further, work on the description of 78 languages and on the teaching of 29 languages is recorded. Indexes enable the reader to trace particular researchers and institutions as well as work in specific fields.

MILLER, G A; JOHNSON-LAIRD, P N
**Language and perception**
Cambridge University Press, 1976 760 pp £12.50

Introduces psycholexicology. The basic argument is psychological, but the authors also draw on recent work on artificial intelligence, linguistics, philosophy and anthropology. The approach to work-meaning is procedural; that is, the meaning is construed as a set of mental procedures necessary in employing the word appropriately and sensibly responding to its use by others. But the meanings of many words are found, as the argument progresses, to depend on functional as well as on perceptual attributes and on the place occupied by a word in a system of concepts. The essence of the argument is that perception and language are only indirectly related as alternative routes towards an enormously complex conceptual world.

**Language Teaching and Learning**

GARVIE, E
**Breakthrough to fluency**
Blackwell, Oxford, 1976 152 pp £1.85

Offers a practical approach to teaching English as a second language to young children, emphasising careful reappraisal of practice in this field in schools and colleges of education. The author helped to organise special immigrant centres in Bradford before she moved to Birmingham's Department for Teaching English as a Second Language.

STUBBS, M
**Language, schools and classrooms**
Methuen, 1976 128 pp £1.40

Offers a guide to basic issues, showing how sociolinguistic concepts can promote a better understanding of the relation of language to learning, and how researchers have investigated the use of language in the classroom. The orientation is practical: readers are invited to set off on investigations of their own and to increase their tolerance of regional and social variations by understanding language use.

**Textbooks and Language Practice**

ADAMSON, D; BATES, M
**Nucleus: English for Science and Technology: Biology**
Longman, 1977 110 pp £1.10
Teacher's Notes 90p

The Nucleus series can be seen to consist of two parts: the **General Science** course and the subject-specific courses, of which **Biology** is the first to appear. Ideally the different parts of the series should be used together, the **General Science** volume either preceding the subject-specific course or used in parallel with it. Both parts may, however, be used independently, as required. The **Biology** course consists of a Students' Book, Teacher's Notes, and tape. As planned for the subject-specific books, this part of the series lays greater emphasis on the presentation of texts through which students are guided and helped to extract information and to follow continuous arguments. The opening section of each unit (of which there are eleven – plus Unit 12 as consolidation) consists of a variety of exercises which present and practise language items in preparation for the study of continuous texts. From Unit 6, the students are increasingly required to produce connecting text themselves. The language items are presented through concepts which are considered essential to the study of biology, there being a fair balance between botanical and zoological topics. The text is extensively illustrated so that practice in information transfer (both oral and written, productive and receptive) to and from charts and graphs is extensive. There is a glossary of the technical words used, with phonetic transcriptions. The Teacher's Notes contain suggestions for classroom development,

notes on the objectives and language items in each unit, and a key to the exercises. The **Nucleus series** has been designed to be used at near-elementary level as well as with students needing a conversion course from general to specific English. The subject-specific books are intended to follow the same level and form of language presentation as **General Science**, but the lexis relevant to each specific subject will obviously be of a more specialised nature.

BYRNE, D; HOLDEN, Susan
**Insight**
Longman, 1976 99 pp £1.60

This book aims to improve oral and written language skills at intermediate level. It is particularly relevant to Papers 1–3 of the Cambridge FCE. Each of the units into which the book is divided contains texts and exercises, a discussion section, a guided writing section and a composition section, except for two where the students are given a certain sequence of events and then asked to complete the rest of the unit themselves. The theme of the book is moments in the lives of a group of people living in an imaginary English town, and thus provides background information on English provincial life. An introduction and detailed list of contents describes the material for the teacher.

O'NEILL, R
**Interaction**
Longman, 1976 87 pp £1.50
tape £6.00
cassette £4.00

This book concentrates on developing oral and written communicative language skills for students studying for Cambridge FCE or equivalent. A basic knowledge of English is assumed. The book is divided into three main sections, each sub-divided into units: Stories and Dialogues; Interviews; and Listening Comprehension. The book is designed to provide 'a system of modules of material' (effected by taking any two units from Section One, one from Section Two, and two from Section Three). A two-page introduction for the teacher begins each section and a list of books is provided that can be used alongside **Interaction. Practice Tests** (A and B) for FCE Candidates (also published by Longman), originally produced to accompany **Mainline Skills** A and B, have now been packaged separately and can be used at the end of **Interaction.**

## A SELECTION OF PUBLISHED SIMULATIONS

### Simulations Designed for ELT

ELTDU
23 Lexden Road
Colchester CO3 3PP

State Your Case (Advanced Business English)
The Crisis Series (Assignments for Technical English)
The Case of Harkwood Ltd (Financial Management)

Paul Norbury Publications Ltd
Caxton House
High Street
Tenterden
Kent

Q-Cards:
The Parent-Teacher Meeting
The Budget Meeting
The Creditors' Meeting

BP Educational Service/Linguistic Systems Engineering
Britannic House
Moor Lane
London EC2Y 9BU

Glendale
Isle of Skye
Scotland

Language Training Pack 1:
North Sea Challenge

### Simulations Designed for Native Speakers of English

CRAC
Bateman Street
Cambridge
(for Esso)

The Star River Project

BP Educational Service
Britannic House
Moor Lane
London EC2Y 9BU

Decisions: WestOil Distribution
EastOil Personnel

Coca-Cola Corporation
Public Relations Dept
Atlantic House
7 Rockley Road
London W14 0DM

Man and His Environment

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| **ILEA**<br>**Media Resources Centre**<br>**Highbury Station Road**<br>**Islington**<br>**London N1 1SB** | Survival and Red Desert<br>Front Page<br>Radio Covingham<br>Property Trial<br>Appointments Board<br>The Dolphin Project<br>Airport Controversy<br>The Azim Crisis<br>Action for Libel |
| **Pitman Medical** | Beck, Francis, Souhami: Tutorials in Differential Diagnosis |

**English Teaching Information Centre (ETIC)**

| Publications | UK Price (postage extra) |
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| ELT Documents | £1 |
| ETIC Occasional Paper English for Academic Study | £1 |
| ETIC Occasional Paper The Foreign Language Learning Process (Autumn 1977) | £1 |
| Information Guide No 1 English for Young Beginners | £1 |
| Information Guide No 2 English for Specific Purposes | £1 |
| Information Guide No 3 Materials for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (Autumn 1977) | £1 |
| Information Guide No 4 Aids to English Language Teaching | £1 |
| Information Guide No 5 Methodology of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (Autumn 1977) | £1 |
| Information Guide No 6 Examinations and Tests in English for Speakers of Other Languages | £1 |
| Index to 25 years of English Language Teaching | 60p |
| Index to English Language Teaching 1972–1976 | £1 |
| Theses and Dissertations related to TESOL deposited with British Universities 1961–1975 | £1 |

Available by post from Printing and Publishing Department, The British Council, 65 Davies Street, London W1Y 2AA (01-499 8011). Personal callers may obtain them from the Language Teaching Library, 20 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1A 2BN.